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Letter dated 21 May 2015 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to submit to you the message to the nation that the President of the Republic of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, delivered on 20 May 2015.

I kindly request that this letter and its annex be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Anésie **Ndayishimiye**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 21 May 2015 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: French]

Message to the nation from His Excellency the President of the Republic

Bujumbura, 20 May 2015

Dear Burundians and friends of Burundi,

1. Allow me, at the outset, to give thanks to Almighty God, who has given us this beautiful country, Burundi. All honour and glory be to Him forevermore.

2. I would like to take time once again to offer reassurance to the people of Burundi and everyone living in Burundi, following the attempt by a group of rogue soldiers and police officers to overthrow our democratically elected institutions by force.

3. I strongly condemn this malicious plan, which was carried out with the sole objective of plunging Burundi and its people into grief and desolation. I thank the international community and countries in the region for their severe condemnation of the attempted coup d'état.

4. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my solidarity and sympathy towards families that have lost loved ones and to those who have been injured in the course of these unfortunate events.

5. It is abundantly clear that this insurgency was closely linked to the failed coup d'état. The attack in the province of Cibitoke by armed men from the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the end of last year was another warning sign of this attempt to bring down the institutions elected by the people.

Fellow countrymen and women and friends of Burundi,

6. Following the attempted coup, some Burundians fled to neighbouring countries and others sought refuge on other continents. I ask them to return to their homeland, as peace and security now reign in Burundi.

7. I also ask their neighbours to ensure, in collaboration with the police and the Administration, that the property of those who fled the country remains intact.

8. I also request the countries that have welcomed them to facilitate the return of all those who wish to come home.

9. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the people of Burundi for maintaining solidarity, in spite of their differences, during the time this faction was attempting to plunge the country into chaos.

Fellow countrymen and women and friends of Burundi,

10. Taking into account the appeal addressed to the Independent National Electoral Commission (Commission électorale nationale indépendente (CENI)), the wish expressed by the region, the international community and certain political parties, and the provisions of the Constitution and the Electoral Code, and at the proposal of CENI, I have just decreed that the local and parliamentary elections originally scheduled to take place on 26 May 2015 shall be postponed until 5 June

2015. That will allow the existing institutions to be replaced by newly elected institutions, in accordance with the law.

11. In that context, we have been able to foil the malicious plan to establish transitional institutions that would have nullified the Peace Agreement and the Global Ceasefire Agreement.

12. With regard to the security situation, I would like once again to inform the nation and the international community that there is calm in every one of the country's 119 communes, and in all 18 provinces of Burundi. Furthermore, I would like to thank all Burundians for the solidarity they have shown during these difficult times, which they have not always done in the past.

13. It would like to stress that, at the lowest administrative level, the situation is calm in 2,998 *collines* and *quartiers* (municipal districts). Indeed, it is surprising that the only reports of insurgency concern four districts in the province of Bujumbura Mairie: Musaga, in the commune of Muha, Cibitoke and Ngagara, in the commune of Ntahangwa, and Nyakabiga, in the commune of Mukaza. That means that peace and security reign in 99.9 per cent of Burundian territory and the population is going about its normal activities.

14. I appeal for calm from the population of the districts concerned, as the stable security situation in the country will allow the elections to take place in peace and calm. I highly commend the defence and security forces for their determination to restore peace and security in those districts and throughout the country. I encourage them to stand firm and move forward in their efforts.

15. I urge my dear compatriots in Musaga, Nyakabiga, Ngagara and Cibitoke in Bujumbura Mairie to keep in mind that the other districts have remained calm and continued to go about their normal activities.

Fellow countrymen and women and friends of Burundi,

16. With regard to the radio stations that were vandalized as a result of the disorder caused by the failed coup, I would like to express my support for the journalists who have suffered and ask them not to lose heart. I would like to inform the public that an investigation has been undertaken and is at an advanced stage. Those found guilty of the crimes by the competent judicial authorities will be held accountable.

17. I reiterate my firm commitment to strengthening journalism as a profession. In accordance with that commitment, I call upon the concerned services to expedite their fact-finding investigation on the events and I request the competent authorities to make this matter a priority.

18. I also take this opportunity to give a warning to any elements of the Burundian or foreign media that may attempt to disseminate information liable to sow hatred and division among Burundians, discredit Burundi or encourage insurrection, particularly during the election period. No citizen of Burundi would wish to relive the tensions of ethnic division or of any other kind. The blood that was shed in the past has served as a lesson.

19. I ask the men and women working in the media, especially the foreign media, to focus on that aspect of the issue and to portray Burundi in a positive light, as the country is larger than just the four districts I have mentioned. I take this opportunity

to remind my brothers and sisters in those districts of something our grandfathers used to say, "A person who decides to destroy his house will always find someone who will lend him the tools."

20. I would therefore like to put the following question to journalists: since over 99.9 per cent of our country is in a state of security and its citizens are going about their daily business, is it not worth reporting on achievements that do credit to Burundi, for example, its efforts in countries such as Somalia, the Central African Republic, the Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and elsewhere?

21. I also request that an investigation be swiftly carried out to shed light on the sad events at the Bumerec hospital in Kinindo. I ask the competent judicial authorities to treat this as an urgent matter so that the people of Burundi and the international community may know the truth and so that the guilty parties, once identified, may be punished in accordance with the law.

22. I take this opportunity to commend the political parties and the independent candidates who have accepted to compete for power through the ballot box and who are now in the midst of their campaigns. That is the way to achieve democracy and establish the foundation for the sustainable peace to which we aspire.

23. At the same time, I ask the political parties that have not yet done so to present their political and social programmes as part of the electoral campaign. Citizens of Burundi will vote freely for the candidate of their choice. That is the only path to which Burundians committed themselves under the Peace Agreement and the Global Ceasefire Agreement.

24. I would like to conclude by reiterating my thanks to all Burundians who have remained united during this time despite the difficulties they have faced and to ask them to keep that spirit alive. I also urge you to run for election, as there is no other legal means of acquiring power. Elections are also the way for us to consolidate the peace that will bring about the development to which we all aspire.

25. God protect Burundi and its people.

26. God bless all Burundians. Thank you.